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# PRESIDENT WARNS OF REBEL VICTORY IN EL SALVADOR

## MAKES TV APPEAL FOR AID

### He Also Seeks Support for the Guerrillas Fighting Against Nicaragua's Regime

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 9 — President Reagan, appealing in a television speech for approval of his package of military and economic aid to Central America, warned tonight that "the Communists will likely succeed" in toppling the Government of El Salvador if Congress rejects the aid.

Mr. Reagan also made his most explicit appeal for support for what was once known as a program of "covert" assistance to rebels seeking to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government.

The President said that those who had taken up arms against the Nicaraguan Government were "freedom fighters" and that the United States "must support both the elected Government of El Salvador and the democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people."

#### Seeks to Allay Fears

But Mr. Reagan sought to allay general fears about the possibility of war or direct military involvement in the region.

The issue, he said, was "definitely not about plans to send American troops into combat in Central America."

He also said there was no "imminent danger" of a nuclear conflict because of "the basic prudence of the Soviet leaders to avoid that kind of challenge to us."

The President offered a sweeping indictment of Nicaragua, charging that its leaders had falsely promised a return to democracy when they came to power in 1979 and had engaged in a "reign of terror" that included subver-

sion of neighboring countries, the killing of Miskito Indians, the burning of the churches and crops and the persecution of Jews and Roman Catholics.

He asserted that arms for the Nicaraguan Government had been supplied by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the Libyan leader.

#### Aid Had Been Acknowledged

Until tonight, Mr. Reagan had occasionally acknowledged that the United States was aiding the Nicaraguan rebels, but he has repeatedly said the only purpose of the aid was to prevent arms from flowing from Nicaragua to neighboring El Salvador.

The President's assertion tonight appeared likely to revive the debate over the aid to the Nicaraguan rebels, which is the focus of widespread opposition on Capitol Hill.

Seeking to dramatize the stakes in Central America, Mr. Reagan said the region had become "the stage for a bold attempt by the Soviet Union, Cuba and Nicaragua to install Communism by force throughout the hemisphere."

#### 'Let Us Show the World'

Mr. Reagan, at the conclusion of the address, said, "Let us show the world that we want no hostile, Communist colonies here in the Americas: South, Central or North."

Mr. Reagan mentioned no specific aid figures, but Administration aides said the speech was part of an effort to generate support for the proposal to spend \$8 billion in the next five years on economic and military assistance for Central America.

The speech was specifically timed for a Congressional debate over the President's request for aid for the 1984 and 1985 fiscal years for El Salvador and the Nicaraguan rebels.

#### Raising the Ante

Although the President has appealed on many occasions for aid to Central America, his speech tonight appeared to raise the ante by painting the grimmest picture to date of the dangers of inaction.

Mr. Reagan said that "evidence mounts of Cuba's intentions to double its support to the Salvadoran guerrillas and bring down that newly elected Government in the fall."

He added, "Unless we provide the resources, the Communists will likely

succeed."

The President did not specify the nature of the evidence. But in the last two weeks, Administration officials have said they have become alarmed by intelligence reports about Cuban intentions to step up subversion in El Salvador with a guerrilla offensive in the fall timed for the American elections.

An internal debate over the seriousness of the situation led to Mr. Reagan's decision to give his speech tonight, officials said. It was the first time Mr. Reagan has spoken directly to Americans from the Oval Office on the subject of Central America.

#### 'All It Takes Is the Will'

Without explicitly setting up Congress for blame in any future military setbacks in the area, Mr. Reagan nonetheless made clear that his program of aid could avert disaster. "The tide of the future can be a freedom tide," he said. "All it takes is the will and resources to get the job done."

At another point, Mr. Reagan said his five-year proposal for aid, based on recommendations last year of his commission on Central America, "can get the job done." The commission, led by former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, recommended a sustained effort to support friendly governments in the region.

Using tough language against critics of his Central American policies, Mr. Reagan said "new isolationists" wanted to "yield to the temptation to do nothing" about what he said was a threat at the United States doorstep.

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